

**Allegany Rehabilitation Associates  
Personalized Recovery Oriented Services**

**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Total Number of Sessions:** Approximately 12-14

**Duration of Each Session:** 30-45 minutes

**PROS Service:** CRS Wellness Self-Management Coping Skill Training

**Target Population:**

- **Diagnoses:** Mood Disorders, Psychotic Disorders, Personality Disorders, Substance Abuse Disorders, Anxiety Disorders
  
- **Barriers to Overcome:**
  - Difficulty managing emotions and mental health symptoms.
  - Low self-esteem.
  - Difficulty communicating thoughts and feelings effectively.
  - Limited coping skills.

**Service Goals:** To assist participants in gaining self-awareness regarding their self-injurious behavior and help them develop alternative coping skills.

**Service Objectives:**

- Participants will learn what self harm is and various reasons people engage in self-harming behavior.
- Participants will learn common misconceptions associated with self-harm.
- Participants will understand the past and current function of their self-harming behavior.
- Participants will learn various strategies for handling others' reactions to their self-harming behavior.
- Participants will learn a variety of healthy alternatives to self-harm.

**Sources:**

The National Self-Harm Network: <http://www.nshn.co.uk/downloads.html>  
Dace, E. , et al. (1998). The Hurt Yourself Less Workbook.

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**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Session:** 1

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain a better understanding of what self-harm is and be able to identify various types of self-harm. Participants will learn why some people engage in self-injurious behaviors.

**Handouts:**

- **P. 7 “Classification of self-harmful behaviors” table**

**Activities:**

- Introduce participants to the Hurt Yourself Less curriculum by going over the group’s stated goals and objectives.
- Survey participants for their definitions of self-harm and write responses on the board.
- Write the definition of self-harm on the board and have participants identify different forms of self-harm.
- Outline and explain the 3 forms of self-harm presented in the Hurt Yourself Less Workbook (p.4): Ritual Self-Harm, Unintentional Self-Harm, and Intentional Self-Harm.
- Discuss that there is no ‘typical’ person who self-harms.
- Identify and discuss various reasons people engage in self-injurious behaviors.

**Process Questions:**

- What does self-harm mean to you?
- Who typically engages in self-injurious behaviors?
- Why do people engage in self-injurious behaviors?

**Homework:** Over the course of the next week, have participants think about the various ways in which they engage in self-injurious behavior.

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**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Session:** 2

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will become more aware of the common misconceptions associated with self-harm. Participants will learn things to do versus things not to do when they find out someone they know is engaging in self-injurious behaviors.

**Handouts:**

- “Things to do versus things not to do” worksheet

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 1.
- Ask participants to identify any stereotypes they are aware of associated with self-injurious behaviors.
- Have participants identify if they agree or disagree with listed stereotypes. Why (Process question #1)?
- Present and discuss the common misconceptions associated with self-harm.
- Ask participants process question #2.
- Explain to participants that most people do not know how to respond appropriately, due to stereotypes and common misconceptions, when they find out someone is engaging in self-harm.
- Hand out and discuss the “things to do...” versus the “things not to do...” work sheet with the participants.
- Ask participants process question #3.

**Process Questions:**

1. Do you agree or disagree with stereotypes associated with self-harm? Why?
2. Why do you think there are a number of misconceptions surrounding self-harm?
3. What would you want your friends to do and not do if they found out you were engaging in intentional self injurious behaviors? A family member? Your counselor?

**Homework:** None

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**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Session:** 3

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain self-awareness regarding how important life events, things, and people have negatively and/or positively affected who they are today.

**Handouts:**

- Pp. 10-12
- P. 15: "Example timeline"

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts learned in session 2.
- Introduce the objective of this session.
- Explain how self-awareness can help participants identify patterns and/or influences on their self-harming behavior.
- Hand out p. 10, "You," and p. 15, "Example timeline," to each participant.
- Have participants complete the "Your life as you remember timeline (p.10)." Prompt participants to refer to the example if needed.
- Hand out and have participants complete the "Things and people who have made you who you are" worksheet (p.11).
- Hand out and have participants complete the "Your self-harm" worksheet (p.12).
  - Prompt participants to identify the items on pp. 10-11 that may have impacted their self-harming behavior in either a negative or positive way.

**Process Questions:**

1. What important life events do you think negatively/positively impacted your self-harming behavior?
2. What people and things do you think negatively/positively impacted your self-harming behavior?
3. Were you able to recognize any patterns in your self-harming behavior? If so, what were they?

**Homework:** None

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**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Session:** 4

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain self-awareness regarding how their self-harming behavior has changed over time.

**Handouts:**

- P. 13 “Self-Harm Timeline”

**Activities:**

- Review main points from session 3.
- Introduce today’s service objective and explain why it is beneficial to know the course and pattern of one’s self-harming behavior.
- Hand out p. 13, “Self-Harm Timeline,” and prompt participants to reflect on how their self-harming behavior has changed over time.
- Have participants share parts of their time line that they view as particularly significant.

**Process Questions:**

1. How has your self-harm changed over time?
2. Have there been times when you have not self-harmed?
3. If so, what did your life look like during these times?

**Homework:** None

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**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Session:** 5

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain self-awareness regarding the antecedents, consequences, and function of their self-harming behavior as it exists today.

**Handouts:**

- P. 20 Looking after your injury
- Pp. 16-17 (for group and homework)

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 4.
- Hand out and have participants complete p. 20 and discuss how it is important to have a plan in place if they do engage in self-harming behavior.
- Have participants share their response.
- Hand out and have participants complete p. 16, "How you feel before you self-harm."
- Have participants share their reflections with the group.
- Hand out and have participants complete p. 17, "How you feel after you self-harm."
- Have participants share their reflections with the group.
- Explain to participants that you would like them to complete pp. 16-17 anytime they engage in self-harming behaviors throughout the course of the curriculum.
- Have extra copies readily available.

**Process Questions:**

1. Have your injuries ever prompted the need for medical attention or assistance from anyone else?
2. Given your responses to pp. 16-17, what do you think the purpose or function of your self-harming behavior is? What changes after you engage in the self-harming behavior?
3. How has the function of your self-harm changed or evolved in anyway?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week's session.

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**Session: 6**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will learn how to respond to other people's reactions to their self-harming behavior. Participants will also learn "fun" distractions they can utilize when they have the urge to self-harm.

**Handouts:**

- P. 21-22 Managing other people's responses
- "Fun" Distractions that can help handout

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 5.
- Go over homework from previous session.
- Hand out and have participants complete pp.21-22.
- Have participants discuss there reflections.
- Discuss the process of using positive, fun distractions to cope with urges to self-harm.
- Hand out the "Fun" distractions handout for participants to take home as a reference.

**Process Questions:**

1. Regarding your self-harm, what have people done or said to you that was unhelpful? What do you wish they would have done?
2. What have people done or said that was helpful?
3. What fun activities can you distract yourself with when you have the urge to self-harm?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week's session.

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**Session: 7**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will review material covered in sessions 1-6.

**Handouts:**

- None

**Activities:**

- Go over homework from previous session.
- Review sessions 1-6 with participants.

**Process Questions:**

1. See process questions from sessions 1-6.

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week's session.

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**Session: 8**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain self-awareness regarding who in their life they feel safe and unsafe with. Participants will learn various inspiring activities and activities they can do with others to help distract themselves from their urges to self-harm.

**Handouts:**

- P. 23-24 Safe People
- “Distractions with others” handout

**Activities:**

- Go over homework from previous session.
- Hand out and have participants complete p. 23.
- Have participants discuss their pictures with the group.
- Hand out the distractions that can help handout and have participants brainstorm other ideas to add to the list.

**Process Questions:**

1. Who are the people you feel safest with? Why?
2. Is there anyone you feel guilty about not putting in the picture? Why?
3. If you would have drawn this picture at another time in your life, how would it look different?
4. What other inspiring distractions can you think of?
5. Have you tried any of the ideas on this list? How did they work for you?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week’s session.

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**Session: 9**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain awareness regarding how their self-harm relates to their self-perception. Participants will learn the distraction strategies of displacement and reinforcement as a means to prevent self-harm.

**Handouts:**

- Pp. 26-28 Your Self
- “Distractions that can help...Displacement, Reinforcing”

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 8.
- Go over homework from previous session.
- Discuss how self-harm can relate to one’s self-perception.
- Hand out and have participants complete pp.26-27.
- Have participants discuss their reflections.
- Hand out and have participants complete and discuss p. 28.
- Hand out the “Distractions that can help...Displacement, Reinforcing” and have participants brainstorm other similar distraction techniques.

**Process Questions:**

1. Did you notice any themes or anything unusual in your responses to the “Your Self” handout?
2. Does your self-harm enable you to have feelings you don’t otherwise have?
3. Is there another way you can feel these feelings?
4. What other displacement or reinforcement distractions can you think of?
5. Have you tried any of the ideas on this list? How did they work for you?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week’s session.

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**Title of Service:** Hurt Yourself Less

**Session:** 10

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will gain self-awareness regarding their body image and will explore their self-harm continuum. Participants will learn physical and creative distraction strategies as a means to prevent self-harm.

**Handouts:**

- Pp. 29-32
- “Distractions that can help... Physical, Creative”

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 9.
- Go over homework from previous session.
- Hand out and have participants complete and discuss pp. 29-30.
- Hand out and have participants complete and discuss pp. 31-32.
- Hand out the “Distractions that can help...Physical, Creative” and have participants brainstorm other similar distraction techniques.

**Process Questions:**

1. Do you harm parts of your body you feel good about or parts that you dislike?
2. Why do you think that is?
3. What other physical and creative distractions can you think of?
4. Have you tried any of the ideas on this list? How did they work for you?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week’s session.

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**Session: 11**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will learn various strategies to follow when their scars are revealed to others. Participants will explore the nature of their internal scars.

**Handouts:**

- P. 43-25 Scars-visible and invisible

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 10.
- Go over homework from previous session.
- Discuss possible strategies of how to deal with people when they notice your scars.
- Discuss what is meant by emotional scars.
- Hand out and have participants complete and discuss pp. 43-45.

**Process Questions:**

1. What strategies have you used in the past?
2. What strategies do you prefer to use?
3. How is your self-harming behavior related to your internal scars?
4. What practical difficulties do you have because of your scars (internal or external)?
5. How do you manage those difficulties?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week's session.

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**Session: 12**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will define their self-harm, how it makes them feel, what others say about it, and identify how they want to feel. Participants will brainstorm alternative strategies for obtaining the desired feeling.

**Handouts:**

- Pp. 50-52

**Activities:**

- Review main concepts from session 11.
- Go over homework from previous session.
- Hand out and have participants complete and discuss pp. 50-52.

**Process Questions:**

1. What do you want to feel?
2. Is there anything, other than self-harm, or anyone else that can help you feel this way?

**Homework:** Provide participants with extra copies of pp. 16-17 and prompt them to fill them out every time they engage in self-harming behavior over the course of the next week. Ask participants to bring their completed worksheets to next week's session.

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**Session: 13**

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

**Service Objectives:** Participants will review information from sessions 8-12.

**Handouts:**

- None

**Activities:**

- Review material from sessions 8-12.

**Process Questions:**

1. See process questions from sessions 8-12.

**Homework:** None